

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

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CEREMONIES FRIDAY WILL SEAL US-USSR AGREEMENT ON MIGRATORY BIRDS

Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin of the Soviet Union and Under Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior James A. Joseph will formally exchange documents Friday, October 13, in a ceremony sealing ratification by their respective countries of a treaty to conserve migratory birds. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. in Room 6151 in the Interior Building.

The US-USSR Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Birds and Their Environment was ratified by the Senate 95-0 on July 12, 1978, and notification was received September 11, 1978, that the Soviet government had officially confirmed. The Migratory Bird Convention is a key element of the 1972 US-USSR Environmental Agreement.

When fully implemented, Under Secretary Joseph said, the Convention will close the major remaining gap in international protection afforded migratory birds throughout the North American/North Pacific flyway. It joins bilateral migratory bird treaties between the U.S. and Canada (1916), Mexico (1936), and Japan (1972).

The agreement provides for coordinated action by the United States and the Soviet Union to protect species that migrate between the two countries or that intermingle in common breeding, staging, or wintering sites along the North American/North Pacific flyway. More than 200 species are listed for protection in an Appendix to the Convention.

The treaty also gives added protection to essential habitats of migratory birds and includes provisions to prevent pollution or degradation of their environment. The two countries have agreed (a) to provide early warning of impending or existing damage to migratory birds or their environments, such as that caused by oil spills; (b) to control the import or export of organisms that are potentially harmful to the birds or their environment; and (c) to identify, list, and protect areas under their respective jurisdictions of special importance to migratory birds.

The Convention also provides for cooperation in research, banding programs, exchange of scientific information, and management.

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